

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9894
INFO AMCONSUL ZAGREB

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 1558

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE BDIS ETRD YO
SUBJ: REPORTED YUGOSLAV DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AMERICAN FIRMS

REF: (A) BELGRADE 1532, (B) STATE 54673, (C) BELGRADE 1208

SUMMARY. NO EMBASSY INFORMATION ON ALLEGED BLACKLISTING OF
JET AND CRUISE LIMITED. CASE KNOWN TO EMBASSY INVOLVES
APPARENT BLACKLISTING OF POPOVIC WINE IMPORTS, INCORPORATED,
MENTONE, CALIFORNIA. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS DEPARTMENT ASK
PESIC ABOUT SOCIAL ACCORD WHICH PROHIBITS BUSINESS ACTIVITIES
WITH SOME FOREIGN FIRMS BUT THAT DEPARTMENT REFRAIN FROM
MENTIONING SPECIFIC CASES. END SUMMARY.

1. REFTEL B CONTAINED FIRST INFORMATION EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED
CONCERNING ALLEGED BLACKLISING OF JET AND CRUISE.

2. CASE ALLUDED TO REFTEL C INVOLVES SMALL FIRM, POPOVICH
WINE IMPORTS, INC., MOUNTAIN HOME VILLAGE, MENTONE, CALIFORNIA.
FIRM RUN BY MR. VLADIMIR POPOVICH, A YUGOSLAV EMIGRE WHO
REPORTEDLY HAS OBTAINED U.S. CITIZENSHIP. POPOVICH WROTE
THE EMBASSY IN MID-1976 THAT AFTER HAVING IMPORTED SMALL
QUANTITIES OF WINE, FRUIT SYRUP AND JAM FROM YUGOSLAV
FIRMS FOR SEVERAL YEARS, HE HAD FOUND THAT THEY WOULD NO LONGER
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DEAL WITH HIM. HE MENTIONED IN PARTICULAR THE YUGOSLAV FOOD
PROCESSING ASSOCIATION KOBEX OF BELGRADE, WHICH WAS REFUSING
TO ACCEPT HIS ORDERS. POPOVICH WROTE THAT EMBARGO WAS
SERIOUSLY HARMING HIS BUSINESS BECAUSE YUGOSLAV
PRODUCTS HAD COMPRISED MOST OF HIS PAST SALES.

3. EMBASSY APPROACHED KOBEX AND AT THE ASSOCIATION'S

SUGGESTION, RAISED MATTER WITH CHAMBER, WHICH ADMINISTERS SOCIAL ACCORD REPORTED REF A. CHAMBER ASSURED US THAT THERE WAS A MISUNDERSTANDING WHICH WOJLD BE CORRECTED.

4. IN FEB 1977, WE WERE VISITED BY U.S. FULBRIGHTER, A FRIEND OF POPOVICH, NOW RESIDENT IN BELGRADE. FULBRIGHTER SAID POPOVICH HAD ASKED HIM TO INFORM EMBASSY THAT YUGOSLAV ENTERPRISE VINO ZUPA WILLING HONOR ORDER FROM THE U.S. FIRMS BUT UNABLE FILL IT BECAUSE CHAMBER OF ECONOMY WAS CONTINUING TO RETAIN U.S. FIRM ON ITS BLACKLIST. ACCORDING FULBRIGHTER'S INFORMATION FROM POPOVICH'S PROBLEMS WITH YUGOSLAV SUPPLIERS HAD BEGUN IN FEB 76 SHORTLY AFTER POPVOICH REFUSED SUGGESTION FROM YUGOSLAV CONSUL GENERAL, SAN FRANCISCO, TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO CONSULATE ON WHERE YUGOSLAV EMIGRES QUOTE GATHER, DRINK AND SOCIALIZE UNQUOTE.

5. FULBRIGHTER BELIEVES POPOVICH EMIGRATED LEGALLY AND CLAIMS POPOVICH HAS VISITED YUGOSLAVIA WITHOUT INCIDENT. FULBRIGHTER BELIEVES POPOVICH'S FATHER SPENT YEAR IN YUGOSLAV JAIL AFTER WORLD WAR II.

6. ON PREVIOUS OCCASION EMBASSY RAISED THE MATTER WITH NORTH AMERICAN DESK AT CHAMBER OF ECONOMY. IF WE CAN GET AN APPOINTMENT, WE INTEND TO REOPEN IT WITH CHAMBER OFFICE HEADED BY STEVAN SUSA, WHO ADMINISTERS THE SOCIAL ACCORD.

7. TWO OTHER U.S. FIRMS WHICH FELT SOCIAL ACCORD MIGHT BE CAUSING THEM DIFFICULTIES SUPPOSEDLY NOW NO LONGER ON THE LIST
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MAINTAINED BY CHAMBER OF ECONOMY. EMBASSY UNCERTAIN WHETHER SOCIAL ACCORD WAS ACTUAL SOURCE OF THEIR DIFFICULTIES IN EITHER CASE, BUT WE WILL BE GLAD TO PROVIDE SKETCHY INFORMATION AT OUR DISPOSAL IF DEPARTMENT WISHES.

7. ACTION RECOMMENDED: EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT DEPARTMENT RAISE SOCIAL ACCORD WITH PESIC AND ASK HIM TO PROVIDE LIST OF ANY U.S. FIRMS ON BLACKLIST. WE SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT DEPARTMENT REFRAIN FROM MENTIONING SPECIFIC CASES UNTIL CHECKING BACK WITH FIRMS ALLEGEDLY BLACKLISTED FOR THEIR AUTHORIZATION AND MORE INFORMATION.
YORK

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 15-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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